



# the Inside Scoop...of OJJ

## *Mission:*

*The Office of Juvenile Justice protects the public by providing safe and effective individualized services to youth, who will become productive, law-abiding citizens.*



*Dr. Mary L. Livers, Deputy Secretary*

The new year is here and with it comes the natural urge to clean house, do better, get healthier, turn a new leaf...you get the idea. I've urged central office staff (staff everywhere, really) to straighten up their offices if necessary – we all feel better working in an orderly environment, and our co-workers appreciate it, too. Just something to think about.

Another thing I passed on to staff was a reminder to remember and deploy the leadership principles we have studied over the years, and to share them with their own staff. But in case you have not seen them, here they are:

### **Leadership Principles**

- Know yourself and seek self-improvement.
- Be technically and tactically proficient.
- Seek responsibility and take responsibility for your actions.
- Make sound and timely decisions.
- Set the example.
- Know your co-workers and staff, and look out for their well-being.
- Keep your staff informed.
- Develop a sense of responsibility in your staff.
- Ensure the task is understood, supervised, and accomplished.
- Build the team.
- Deploy your staff in accordance with their capabilities.

Staff at every level can benefit from these important principles. I hope they will assist each of you, in every OJJ location, to have a successful 2013.

**"Doc" Dr. Mary L. Livers**



## Give the best

When you value what you have, you make what you have more valuable. When you care about what you're doing, you make what you're doing much more effective.

Give the best of yourself to the moment, and the moment becomes filled with great treasure. Be generous to others with your time and attention, and you'll find yourself among delightful companions.

Life is largely what you give it. Offer yourself sincerely and abundantly, and that true abundance will be reflected in the world you experience.

If you offer complaints, you'll receive much to complain about. When you give love, there will be much to love.

Improve yourself, your actions, your outlook, and your world improves. Be genuinely useful, and you'll have much more with which to work.

What flows out from you surely, eventually and in greater measure flows back to you. Give your very best, and it comes back even better.

— Ralph Marston

## Staff Spotlight

### Spotlight on...



**Administrative Supervisor 2**  
**Earnessa Moncriste**

**New Orleans/Jefferson Metro Office**

**Administrative Supervisor 2 Earnessa “Ernie” Moncriste** went to work at a bank 20-some years ago, right out of school. When the bank closed a couple of years later, she landed a position as a file clerk at the New Orleans OJJ office. She is still with OJJ 21 years later, having moved up the ladder and established herself as a key member of the staff.

“Ms. Moncriste has worked in the New Orleans Regional Office for about 21 years. Earnessa is always willing to lend a hand to assist staff with personnel issues,” said **Regional Manager Kelly Clement**. “She has completed American Sign Language courses at Delgado Community College and will soon be a certified interpreter. She recently participated in a staffing at Bridge City by interpreting for a youth's mother who is hearing impaired. Ms. Moncriste stays on top of new policies and procedures regarding personnel issues and ensures that staff is aware of them. She is invaluable when it comes to assisting with newly hired staff, making sure that everything is completed properly and timely. She is a go-getter and does not need to be told what to do. She completes assignments before they are even assigned. The New Orleans Regional Office runs more efficiently because of her.”

“I was always taught to be hard worker, and I always give my all,” Earnessa said. “I take that with me, no matter where I go and what I

do. I love the people here at the New Orleans office and I always enjoy interacting with them."

Earnessa has seen a lot of changes in the agency during two decades of work. "You get used to the changes, and it's always great to learn something new," she said. "I'm a people person and I love to deal with everybody. I really like to get to know the people who come to work here. I love my job and all the many tasks I do. I really enjoy taking care of everybody."

"OJJ is a big family," Earnessa said. "I hear what the officers say about kids on their caseloads, and I can see that when kids have no direction it's easy for them to go the wrong way. My job is to make sure the PPOs have everything they need, so in turn, they can give their kids what they need to succeed. Although I don't have regular contact with the youth, in that way I can help make sure that the kids really get what they need."

*"Earnessa understands how important her contributions are to meeting the mission."*

"I watch the PPOs help the parents, too," she continued. "Often the parents need encouragement as well. I appreciate the fact that the officers are really helping the people they work with. The officers create a positive atmosphere and I like to support them so they can focus on what they need to do to help the kids and families."

Earnessa's main contact with youth and parents is meeting them at the front desk when they visit the office. "When a deaf lady came in, I was able to assist her," she said. "I love working here and I plan to be here as long as I can."

Without expressing it, Earnessa understands her role, how she fits within the agency, and how important her contributions are to meeting the mission.

A native of New Orleans, Earnessa is a graduate of L.B. Lindsey Sr. High School and Delgado Community College, with an associate degree in ASL. She also studied business administration at UNO.

Earnessa takes care of people on her personal time, too. She noted that several members of her church, Franklin Ave. Baptist Church, are deaf, and she became involved with the deaf ministry there. "When I had the opportunity to go to classes at my former church (Beacon Light) for American Sign Language (ASL), I decided to do that. It took a year to finish those classes. It was a lot of work to learn ASL – at first I did not know how much work it would be! ASL is considered a foreign language, and it has its own grammar and syntax. But I love the deaf people and the deaf culture."

She was recently named Director of the church's Hands of Praise Deaf Ministry and she interprets at one service every Sunday at church, and also whenever needed elsewhere.

Church activities take up a lot of her time. Not surprisingly, she also does volunteer work, helping to feed the homeless at a local shelter.

Earnessa also has fun – she enjoys watching old movies, attending church fellowships, and since she loves music, she loves going to concerts and festivals. She also interprets music for the deaf and hard-of-hearing at the New Orleans Jazz Festival every year.

"I also spend a lot of time helping the deaf members of my church as well as other people in the deaf community," Earnessa said. "I like to help them with their problems and take them on outings. That takes a lot of time but it's something they need and I enjoy."

Her great passion is travel. "I love to travel and see the world," Earnessa said. "I enjoy seeing other cultures and ways of life that are so different from New Orleans. I learn so much when I travel." She goes someplace

every year, generally with a friend or family member.

Earnessa is close to her family, which includes a sister and three brothers. Both parents were teachers, and her dad was also a coach. One of her brothers is an engineer living in Hawaii, and she has been out to visit him and his family in Honolulu several times. "It's beautiful out there – both the weather and the landscape," she said. On one of her trips, she had a little more excitement than planned. "We were there when that terrible tsunami hit. My brother lives in the mountains outside the city, so he did not have any problems, but we did see damage and destruction on the outskirts of Honolulu."

She has also visited almost all 50 states, Canada, the Caribbean islands of St. Thomas and St. Croix, and the Bahamas. Next up on her list – Australia.

"When I was young, my dad made sure we went someplace every summer. It's a big world and I want to see it!" She noted that the brother in Hawaii travels the world for his job as an engineer, and sends her pictures of the places he's been. She's planning to visit some of those places as well.

And one more thing. "I LOVE watching games shows, especially Wheel of Fortune," Earnessa said. "Not long after Katrina, my sister and I were contestants on Wheel. The show flew a group of New Orleanians out to California, and as contestants, my sister and I made it to the last round. We won some money and a trip to Las Vegas."

Earnessa stops and says, and one MORE thing – "I'm a huge Saints fan – a real Who Dat!"

Clearly Earnessa lives a life of service while she enjoys all that life has to offer. For OJJ, that translates into effortlessly meeting the mission every day.

## Agency News

### CQIS Policy Updates

#### Policies approved:

C.1.4 Attorney Visits 11/28/12  
 A.1.17 Office of Juvenile Justice (OJJ) Community Liaison Councils 12/11/12  
 A.2.8 Sexual Harassment 12/13/12  
 A.2.40 Probationary Period 12/17/12  
 A.3.6 Grants Administration 12/14/12  
 A.5.6 Internet and Email Usage 12/11/12  
 B.2.11 Modification of Disposition 12/14/12  
 B.8.10 Access to Computers and Certain Office Equipment by Youth 12/11/12  
 C.2.8 Youth Visitation in Secure Care Facilities 12/13/12

#### Policy rescinded:

B.2.9 Youth Placement Review Process rescinded 12/13/12

### Condolences

Our heartfelt condolences to members of the OJJ family who have recently lost family members. Please keep these staff members in your thoughts and prayers.

#### Bridge City

**Retired JJS Mary Gatlin's** daughter, **Lisa Waker**, passed away. Mrs. Gatlin is dear to our hearts and recently retired from duty as a Juvenile Justice Specialist 6 to care for her family.

**JJS4 Latitia Watts'** grandmother, **Lucille Wallace Tilliman**, passed away. Ms. Tilliman's life and wisdom were shared on this earth for 101 years.

#### Jetson

**CCS Health Services Administrator Pam Poole** recently lost her mother.

#### New Orleans/Jefferson - Metro

Heartfelt condolences to two members of the Metro Office: **PPO Austin Johnson**, who lost his grandfather, **Austin Louis Johnson, Sr.**,



and **PPO Nakia Harris**, who lost her mother, **Glenda Gibson**.

### Swanson

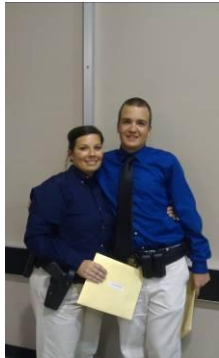
Condolences to the family, friends and co-workers of both Southside High School **Para-educator Keith Strawder**, and **Social Services Counselor Lawanda Faye Guice**, who recently passed away.

## Alexandria Regional Office

### Congratulations

Alexandria OJJ welcomes **Monique LaCour** as the Regional Manager for the office. Monique has been with OJJ for approximately 10 years, serving as a Probation/Parole Officer and Supervisor, and as a Program Specialist for four years.

**Sharon Graham** was promoted to Administrative Assistant 5. Sharon has been with Alexandria OJJ for 23 years and will now be working as an assistant to **Regional Director Johnny Qualls**. We will miss her.



**PPO1 Kristen Hebert** and **PPO1 Mekenzie Maxwell** recently graduated from the Alexandria Police Academy. **PPS Clay Dupuy**, **PPS Donna Desoto** and **PPO3 Lori Mayeux** attended the graduation services. We would like to congratulate Mekenzie and Kristen and

welcome them back.

**PPO2 Justin Guidry** attended Army Logistics University in Fort Lee, Virginia for two weeks. Justin, who is a 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant in the National Guard, received training in maintenance operations and ammunition distribution. By receiving this training, it makes Justin eligible for promotional opportunities from 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant to Captain. We are very proud of Justin.

**PPO1 Mekenzie Maxwell** celebrated his one-year anniversary with OJJ.

**PPO2 Frank Parrino** and wife **Candi** welcomed their daughter **Ella Marie Parrino** to the world in December. She weighed 8 lbs, 7 oz. and was 21 inches long. She is doing well and big brothers **Gavin** and **Noah** are very excited to have a little sister.



**Adm. Coordinator 3 Cassaundra Conston** welcomed her fourth grandchild, **Chance Conston**, born in November.

**Supervisors John Baker** and **Donna Desoto** attended the supervisors' training held at central office.

### Christmas Celebrations

Wanting to do something different, Alexandria OJJ held their Christmas luncheon at Ryan's Buffet Restaurant. By this doing this, it gave **PPS Clay Dupuy** and **PPS John Baker** a break from cooking.

Alexandria OJJ collected canned goods and other non-perishable items that were donated to the Food Bank of Central Louisiana.



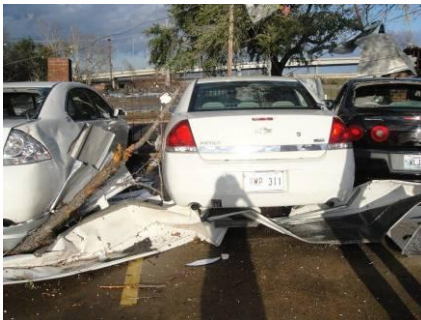
*From back to front: **PPO3 Angelic Johnson**, **PPS Donna Desoto**, **PP03 Heath Wallace**, **PPO 1 Mekenzie Maxwell**, **PPO 2 Todd Roszell** and **PPO3 Trinity Adams**.*

Along with the food drive for the needy, staff members also donated books for youth at Jetson and Ware Youth Center Intensive Residential Programs. The books, pictured below, were well received by the youth.



### Another Christmas Event

Renovations to the office were finally completed. Just when we thought everything was back to normal, "Mother Nature" thought otherwise. A tornado hit our office on Christmas Day and caused water damage throughout the building, as well as damage to all nine state vehicles. The photos tell the story. A special thanks to Baton Rouge OJJ and Lafayette OJJ for the use of some of their vehicles.



### Happy Birthday

**PPS Donna Desoto** - December 11  
**PPO3 Heath Wallace** - December 23

### Baton Rouge Regional Office

#### Employees of the Month

**PPO2 Katina Broden** was selected November Employee of the Month. Katina was acknowledged by her co-workers for her extraordinary service in the community.



She is very dedicated to her clients and making sure that they are receiving the best services possible. Congratulations, PPO Broden, and thanks for your awesome service to the youth you serve.



**PPO3 Patsy Adams** was chosen December Employee of the Month by her coworkers because she is always going above the call of duty. She puts her all into every case she works. She is a very detailed, hard worker with a great attitude. Patsy is frequently seen in *The Inside Scoop* for helping others in the office and on her caseload. Patsy is a very loyal, enthusiastic, diligent worker who is always striving to do the best work possible. She recently provided an outfit for a youth on her caseload so that he would have appropriate attire to wear for a job interview. Thanks, PPO Adams, for going above and beyond.

### Good Luck

**PPO Shantia Roy-Jones** began the CARTA POST Academy, and we wish her all the best. We can't wait to have her back in the office! Good luck, Shantia, enjoy your experience.

Baton Rouge OJJ continued with more of the giving spirit, with our annual holiday Toys for Teens Drive, supplying teenagers with special holiday gifts. We also prepared our annual holiday baskets for less fortunate families in the community. Way to go Baton Rouge OJJ, keep up the good work!

### Happy Birthday

We would like to send a happy birthday shout out a number of our staff. Happy birthday, Team, and we wish you many, many more!



*AC3 Christina Graham, PPS Rickey Cannon, PPO3 Elois Nelson*



*PP01 Keelen Robinson, Social Services Counselor Jennifer Anderson, Transport Officer Jason Jones*



*PPS Marina Jenkins, PPO1 Tina Roach*

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*Sunset in Afghanistan. Photo by Sgt. Major V.P. Singleton, brother of Jetson Adm. Asst. Ramona Garror.*

## Bridge City Center for Youth

### Thanks from the Director

**Director Namon Reid** said, "I would like to thank the many staff members for the dedication, hard work and commitment they displayed in January when we experienced a power failure both in our facility and the entire Bridge City community. Your teamwork and desire to maintain a safe environment assured a calm atmosphere without incident during a crisis. To all who maintained the professional courage to do what was right even when it was difficult. If anyone's name was missed, we do apologize. All of your efforts were truly appreciated. Thank You!"

JJS4 Damon Deal, Operations Supervisor; JJS5 Seletar Gosa, Safety Coordinator and Control Center; JJS2 Natalie Broussard, Control Center; JJS2 Larry McKinney, Front Gate; JJS2 Ashanti Bashful, Intake Unit; JJS3 Louis Evans, Acting Rover; JJS1 Michael Barnes, Acting Rover; JJS1 Autrial Manning, Serenity Dormitory; JJS1 Ashton Bennett, Justice Dormitory; JJS1 Bobby Crawford, Hope Dormitory; JJS1 Justin Anthony, Pride Dormitory; JJS4 Denise Gasquet, Hope and Pride Dormitory Group Leader; JJS1 Sharard Ford, Perseverance Dormitory; JJS3 Shanita James, Liberty Dormitory; JJS6 Keith Joseph, Liberty Dormitory Group Leader; JJS1 Stacey Bruno, Harmony Dormitory; JJS1 Miguel Thomas, Faith Dormitory; JJS1 Paul Gordon, Destiny Dormitory; JJS2 Joquanda Jolly, Destiny Dormitory Acting Group Leader; Deputy Director Darrell Foster; Interim Assistant Director Lance Daniels; Adm. Pro. Dir. 2 Cassandra Washington; Adm. Asst. 5 Sharonda Smith; Director of Treatment Angela Wiggins; Social Worker 6 Doris Duckett; Social Services Counselor 5 Dorothy Favorite; Social Services Counselor 3 Tamara Cotton; Social Services Counselor 3 Adekemi Osundare; RN Ariel Green and RN Crystal Hernandez.



## Thanks for a Wonderful Christmas Program

I would like to send out a very special thank you to **Instructors Christopher Mayes, Bella Berry, Chantyle Jones** and the entire Christmas Committee. The Christmas program was wonderful and festive. Thank you for all of the planning and preparation you put into the program. The students were well rehearsed. The scenery and costumes were beautiful and they helped to tell the true story of the birth of Jesus.

**Chef Ron Sonnier** and his crew of students did a fantastic job with preparing and serving the Christmas meal. The meal was colorful, nutritious and delicious.

We would like to thank everyone for supporting the Education Department. Working together, we can make positive changes in the lives of the students.

*Sandra S. Frazier*  
Interim Principal

## BCCY Holds Family Empowerment Meeting

By Family Liaison Donna Bowie

Bridge City held its first quarterly parent meeting of 2013 on a Saturday morning. Twenty parents/guardians attended, along with several staff members from Bridge City and central office. **Mr. Kendrick** (grandparent of one of our youth) opened the meeting with a prayer.

**Director Namon Reid** introduced BCCY staff who were present. I was privileged to greet and thank those in attendance for coming and stressed how important family involvement and participation is to the success of their youth. I reminded them that family members are an important part of the team and it takes collaboration to get through this phase of their lives.

**Treatment Director Angela Wiggins** was our keynote speaker. She engaged the audience in great dialogue as she led discussions on the visitation process and the newly created GED dorm. Angela was supported by the facility director and other BCCY staff during the hour-long discussion. Many of our long-term parents agreed that this was one of the most well attended and rewarding parent meetings they've attended at BCCY. They even suggested starting earlier to allow for more fellowship and time for these empowering sessions.



*Participants at the Family Empowerment Meeting.*

Thanks to all for an awesome job. I personally would like to thank **Director Namon Reid, Angela Wiggins** and **Administrative Assistant Sharonda Smith** for their dedication and the hard work put forth for the meeting. Kudos to the entire Bridge City staff for making it happen. I would also like to thank **Exec. Mgt. Officer 1 Gwen Brinkley-Jones** at central office for her donation of a gift for a door prize for the parents.

## Destiny at Work

In the spirit of LAMod, Destiny Housing Unit participated in a clean-up project recently. The young men elected to come together as a team to rake leaves and pick up trash in the courtyard of the Bridge City campus. Once the expectations were established, the youth were off to the races. They begin to form subgroups to work towards the goal of collecting the



most leaves. It was rewarding to see the pride they exhibited as they worked as a team to beautify the campus. At the completion of their healthy competition, the young men of Destiny Housing Unit collectively gathered over 30 bags of leaves. This project allowed the youth to work together and contribute to the preparation of the ACA audit. The photos below tell the story.



## Central Office

### A Message from Dr. Livers



*The gifts purchased by central office for a family in the community.*

Central office staff, you are to be commended for your generosity one more time! Our small staff here at central office raised \$351.00 to support the family of one of our youth for Christmas. The Baton Rouge P&P office did the shopping and we can feel good that we contributed to a family's need during the holiday season. I hope this act of kindness from "strangers" helped bring this family a season of joy. God bless you all for your kind spirit. You are awesome!

*Doc*

### Dr. Livers' Birthday+ Celebrated



December was a great month for **Dr. Mary Livers**, and we feted her with a cake and good wishes on her birthday AND her election as President-Elect of ACA. She's not saying how many birthdays she's celebrated but did say she's peeking over the edge of a big one.

## Birthday and Retirement Celebrated

**Family Liaison Donna Bowie** had a rough time with her birthday cake. First the candles would not go out no matter how hard she huffed and puffed. And then – the birthday girl served her own birthday cake to guests.



**Nona Holmes, OJJ's purchasing expert, retired!** The Morale Committee handled the going-away party, with spectacular decorations by Receptionist Jean Buffington. Pictured are Nona, Undersecretary Connie Percell wishing Nona a wonderful retirement, and the gorgeous cake.



## Congratulations

**CQIS Program Coordinator Katie K. Justice and husband Todd Justice** welcomed their new baby boy, **Jackson Todd Justice**, on Dec. 21. Jackson weighed in at 6.9 lbs. and was 20 ¼ inches long. CQIS is thrilled with the newest addition to the family!



## Mrs. Smith Goes to....New York

**Director of Health Services Kelly Smith** and her family spent Thanksgiving in New York City. She, **husband Clinton** and **daughter Candace** were joined by two other families. They enjoyed Thanksgiving dinner at Sylvia's in Harlem.



Above left, Kelly and Candace. Right, Clinton and Kelly. Below, the Smith family – Clinton, Kelly and Candace.



Kelly shares this photo: "The city view is from the Empire State Building Observatory," she said. "You can view the entire city from up there. Very exhilarating!"





Adm. Asst. Shaeki Shanklin's niece and nephew, twins Kendall and Kendrick Cannon, Jr., are in the limelight once again. They were king and queen of the 2012 62nd Cortana Kiwanis Christmas Parade. *Right, Kendall on the runway during the Macy's fashion show.* Kendall has served as a model for an OJJ publication – she is on the cover of our *Secure Care Handbook for Parents*. The twins are seniors in the gifted program at McKinley High School in Baton Rouge.



*Recognizing veterans' service: youth made goodie bags and a poster for Mr. Lee, Judge Burris' bailiff, right, who served in the U.S. Navy.*

## From Social Services

By SSCIV Lori Wagner

I have been working with **Youth C.D.** and her family since January 2012. She was referred by **PPO Adam Nyquist** and it was a very appropriate referral for Social Services. She will be closing successfully this week.

When I became involved, she was in a regular school setting struggling with her grades and behavior at school. The family also wanted services to deal with their daughter's behavior; however they ended up addressing many of their own issues, and they have become very knowledgeable and successful in changing their patterns of parenting. The changes were slow in coming, and the youth struggled very hard to change. She has since implemented her self control skills, self esteem skills, and has been placed back into the regular school system, after being expelled and attending an alternative school. This has been a very rewarding intervention for me as well as the family. Congratulations to C.D. and her family for all of the endless hours of making changes in their lives!

## Hammond Regional Office

### Helping Others

**PPO 3 Leigh Calmes** reports that four of the kids on her caseload went with the Walk With Me tracker program to serve Thanksgiving dinner for the homeless in New Orleans.

### Recognizing Service

**PPO3 Tiffany James** participated in a Veteran's Day activity with the youth in the 22nd JDC Juvenile Drug Court program. They made a poster for Mr. Lee, Judge Burris' bailiff, who served in the US Navy. All of the youth signed it and two of the kids presented it to him in Drug Court and told him how much they appreciated him and his service to our country. They also made cards and a care package filled with goodies (candy, notepads, pens, Christmas items, flags, card game, etc.) to send to the troops overseas.



I have been working with **Youth B.S.**, who has struggled while on probation with many issues. Recently we began addressing his substance abuse issues and he was eventually placed into inpatient treatment. He successfully completed the program after making many changes, however, his environment at home did not change and he relapsed. I continued to work with him to address his issues.

His family, including mom and dad, attended sessions with him at the office. This took a lot of courage and dedication on his father's part, as he and the youth have issues that go back many years. This family is an inspiration, as they have survived many negative events that would have ripped apart other families. The youth is still struggling, but his family has stepped up their support and enlisted the help of other family members.

Although not completed, I do believe this youth will successfully complete his probation without coming into our custody. It is awesome to see families become more supportive and resilient to help their children!

### What's Going On

**PPO2 Adam Nyquist** reports that he supervises a youth who closed successfully in December. He said this youth had no issues while on probation and worked the Pathways Program in the school system. He obtained his GED and welding certificate through the Pathways Program, and has a job lined up.

**PPO2 Jonathan Varnado** tells us that a youth on his caseload graduated from the Youth Challenge Program in December. This youth obtained his GED through the program and he plans to take some college courses, then join the military. Jonathan also reported that a youth on his caseload graduated from drug court in December.

**PPO3 Amy Johnson** reported that a youth on her caseload successfully completed and graduated from the Youth Challenge Program in December. This youth obtained her GED and made a 26 on the ACT. She has enrolled at Southeastern Louisiana University and began classes in January. This youth was a drug court participant who completed the program successfully after the Youth Challenge Program and earned an early release from probation. The youth advised the Court and PPO Johnson that she wants to be a probation officer to help other youth like herself. Amy also reported that she has another youth who obtained her GED with an overall average score of 600. This youth is now preparing to take her ACT so she can attend college!

**PPO3 Tiffany James** reported that a youth on her caseload successfully graduated from the 22<sup>nd</sup> JDC drug court program in December.

**PPO1 Julie Church** reported that a youth on her caseload made the soccer team at his high school.

**PPO2 Jamie Oertel** reported that she brought the mother of a youth on her caseload to see him at Swanson Center for Youth. Jamie says that since this visit, the youth has done an amazing turn-around. He has brought his grades up, changed his behavior, and is doing so much better.

**PPO3 Wendy Clark** reported that she has a youth on her caseload who was a fighter in the past. This youth is in the Walk With Me Tracker Program and they have been working diligently with her on how to properly handle peer issues at school. Wendy recently found out that this youth was being taunted and pushed to fight, and instead of fighting, she went to her guidance counselor to request that her class be changed so she would not be in any classes with the other youth, thus addressing the situation.

**PPS Dawnita Hodge** reported that three female youth on probation in her unit decided to make a change by choosing to go to the Youth Challenge Program in Pineville.

PPS Hodge commends **PPO3 Danielle August** for working with this family and with the Youth Challenge Program to have this youth accepted into the program after the deadline. In January, Danielle assisted in having this youth transported to Pineville where she successfully enrolled in the program.

**PPO3 Truett Glass** reported that a youth on his caseload has been accepted to Job Corps in Baton Rouge. This youth will begin in January and will be working on job skills for the oil field.

### Off To POST



*Sarah Gilberti*



*Adam Nyquist*

**PPO1 Sarah Gilberti** and **PPO2 Adam Nyquist** completed the requirements for acceptance into the Slidell Regional POST Academy. The academy started in January, and for the next 12 weeks, co-workers and staff at Hammond OJJ will be wishing each of them the best. They are both very good probation officers and we are sure they will represent the agency well.

### Christmas Celebrations

Hammond OJJ held its annual Christmas party in December, and several contract providers and local court personnel joined in the festivities with us. To make the holidays

even more fun, the office held several contests in the days leading up to the party.

Staff participated in an ornament-making contest, a door decorating contest, and an ugly sweater contest. **PPO1 Sarah Gilberti** took home prizes for the door decorating contest and the ornament contest. She did kind of sway votes her way for the door decorating contest by putting free cookies by her door! **PPO3 Danielle August** took home the prize for the ugly sweater contest, and boy was it UGLY....uh....it was really creative!

Special thanks go out to the decorating committee: **PPO3 Danielle August**, **PPO2 Jamie Oertel**, **PPO1 Sarah Gilberti**, **SSC Lori Wagner**, **PPO1 Robert Penn**, **PPO3 Mark Davis**, **PPS Carrie Austin**, **PPO3 Tiffany James** and **PPO3 Wendy Clark**, who all worked hard to come up with ideas and assist in putting up decorations.

Extra special thanks to **PPO2 Jamie Oertel**, whose holiday spirit was so strong that it was contagious! As always, we had lots of great food with people pitching in dishes, and even some doing some cooking the day of the party. Anyone who's ever attended a party here knows that Hammond knows how to throw a great party and have a wonderful time!



*Playing the Dirty Santa Gift Exchange, from left, PPS Carrie Austin, PPO2 Jonathan Varnado, PPO2 Denise Wall, RM Sue Larisey, PPO1 Robert Penn and PPO3 Danielle August.*



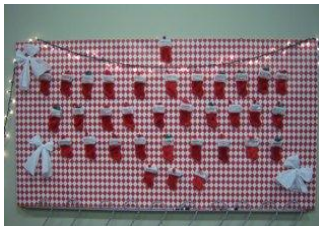
*Dirty Santa Gift Exchange, from left, PPS Roy Wittorf, SSC Lori Wagner, PPO1 Sarah Gilberti and PPS Johnny Prentice.*



*Winners! Left, Sarah's a Winner! PPO1 Sarah Gilberti, left, and PPO2 Jamie Oertel. Right, Danielle's a Winner! PPO3 Danielle August, PPO2 Jamie Oertel.*



*Below, our homemade decorations.*



*PPO1 Sarah Gilberti's winning door. Below, door decorations.*



### Finally, a Girl!

PPO3 Kasey Wall was surprised with a baby shower before she left for maternity leave. Kasey, her **husband Victor**, and their two sons welcomed a baby girl, **Camille**, into the world in November. Congratulations to the Wall Family!





## Jetson Center for Youth

### Jetson Youth Enjoyed Special Visits with Their Families

In December many of the youth at Jetson were able to spend several hours with their family members. The preparations for this event started about six weeks earlier. The youths' parents/guardians received letters to inform them about the event, which took place in the dining hall. Preparations involved the director's office, the education department, recreation, maintenance and **Assistant Director Fouad Harb**.

The visits were very successful, in fact they were the busiest in years. About 38 visitors and 24 youth participated. Staff participants included all department heads, the recreation department, social services, JJS staff and staff development. The dining hall was beautifully decorated, as was the check-in room at the front gate. Many youth and parents were able to take pictures by the gorgeous Christmas tree.

**Director Angela Sutton** met all the visitors individually and discussed with them the progress of the youth. **Family Liaison Donna Bowie** supported the event and met all the visitors. The event was very successful and Director Sutton extended the time for an additional 30 minutes. The youth, the staff and the visitors enjoyed the visits, which were made successful by the team effort by all departments.

### New Staff Welcomed

**Principal Ronnie B. Knox** and the faculty and staff welcome **Gayther Albert** to the Scenic Alternative High School family. Ms. Albert serves as the Administrative Assistant to the principal at Scenic Alternative High School. The Baton Rouge native brings with her over 10 years of administrative experience. Welcome aboard, Ms. Albert!

### Christmas Gifts Provided to Youth

On Christmas morning staff were welcomed at the front gate by a group including **Recreation Specialist Alonzo Jones**, **Sunshine A/B Group Leader Ron Jarrell**, **Autumn Group Leader Walter Chisholm**, **Sunset Group Leader Micon Gaines**, **Sunrise Group Leader Shera Knighten**, **Asst. Director Fouad Harb** and **JJS/Rover Jumar Ficklin**. Then they proceeded to all the housing units and greeted the youth with not only best wishes, but also Christmas bags containing a number of gifts. The youth were very thankful for their gifts and the staff good wishes.



*Assistant Director Fouad Harb, center, with a group of happy youth on Christmas morning.*

### Christmas Program Held

Jetson held its annual Christmas program in the Dining Hall, with the theme *A Jetson Christmas*. Youth from all dormitories were selected to participate in the program, designed to highlight the beauty of Christmas in various cultures.

The program included song, dramatic interpretations, poetry readings and Christmas music for the viewing and listening pleasure of the audience. The ceremony concluded with a period of fellowship and a luncheon with a special Christmas menu consisting of pork roast, cornbread dressing, peas and carrots, cake and punch.

Special thanks to **Instructor Bishop Samuel Butler**, who chaired the event, and all the teachers and staff at Jetson who helped to make the program a success.

*Below are scenes from the program – an attentive audience and youth actors.*



\*\*\*\*\*



*Santa even visits Afghanistan. JCY Adm. Asst. Ramona Garror's brother Sgt. Major V.P. Singleton.*

## Junior League Donates Funds for a Smart board

The Junior League of Baton Rouge recently provided Jetson with a grant of \$1,800.00 for the purchase of a Smart Board (Prometheon 500 Pro-Range ActivBoard). Each year through its Community Assistance Fund (CAF), the Junior League of Baton Rouge assists agencies in the Baton Rouge area with specific, short-term monetary needs. The focus is on projects meeting the Junior League's vision statement of enhancing the quality of life in the Baton Rouge community in the areas of physical health, education and cultural development. The Junior League of Baton Rouge total CAF giving from 1980 through 2012 is over \$720,000.

Many thanks to the Junior League for this generous donation to our school.



*Accepting the check for a grant are from left, Jetson Director Angela Sutton, Youth Devin C., Grants Administrator Dr. Paul Graham, Youth Daniel P., Asst. Director Fouad Harb, Leslie Campbell of the Junior League, Principal Ronnie Knox and Director of Education Kim Mims. Below, the "check."*



## Volunteer Honored as Foster Grandparent

The Foster Grandparent program is a program of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Baton Rouge, providing volunteers to work with young people in a variety of facilities. Volunteer Foster Grandparents are 55 years old or older, and they share their experience and compassion by helping children learn to read, providing one-on-one tutoring, and guiding children at a critical time in their lives.

Jetson Volunteer Coordinator **Barbara Williams** and Instructor **Denise Clause** recently attended a program to recognize and honor Foster Grandparents at the Catholic Life Center. Present was Jetson's Foster Grandparent, **Grandmother Davis**.



*Attending the Foster Grandparents program are, left, Instructor Denise Clause with Grandmother Davis; right, Denise, Grandmother Davis and Volunteer Coordinator Barbara Bell.*

"We have one Foster Grandparent, Grandmother Davis," said Denise. "I don't even know her first name. We all call her Grandmother. She comes four days a week. She gives hugs and tries to teach the kids manners and assist in any way she can. They look for her every day."

"We presented her with a dozen pink roses from my boys and myself," Denise continued. "She volunteers in Sunset Dorm but loves all the boys! Sunset Dorm youth made her a card that was also presented with the roses."



*CCS/Jetson had reason to celebrate. Pictured at the recent Christmas celebration after their health services audit is the Jetson nursing staff, from left, OJJ Health Services Director Kelly Smith, RN Qiana Armstead, RN Antoinette Stewman, LPN Anitra Bynum and NP Diana Cousin.*

## Lafayette/Opelousas Regional Office

### Congratulations

**Kaitlyn O.** from **PPO Wanda Sylvester's** case load graduated from the National Guard's Youth Challenge Program in December. Congratulations, Kaitlyn!

**PPO Seth Richard** and his wife welcomed a baby boy, **Carter Richard**.

**PPO Ashley Laborde** and her husband are the proud parents of a new baby boy, **Easton Laborde**.

### From the Heart

**PPS Robert Guirard** participated in the Camellia Crossing 5K run to benefit Miles Perret Cancer Services. Robert's entry fee went to benefit the center and its effort to provide support services for Acadiana families struggling with cancer. Adding to the fund was **PPO Michelle Deshotel's** pledge donation for Robert's finishing the race.



Lafayette OJJ donated over 500 pounds of food to Lafayette FoodNet, a food bank serving the Acadiana area. Many needy families across the region received a Thanksgiving food basket, thanks to the donations received.

**PPOs Rhonda Gallet and Ashley Laborde, PPSs Robert Guirard and Joey Denais, and AS Cheryl Denais** donated toys to families in need at Faith House.

**PPOs Jamie Baronet, Kristi Eames, Ronald Rogers and PPS Tracy Flores** purchased Christmas items for Miles Perret Cancer Services' Christmas Giving Tree Program. The three staff members purchased gifts that a child receiving the center's services requested.

**PPOs Jamie Baronet, Teresa Breaux, Michelle Deshotel, Kristy Eames, and PPSs Tracy Flores and Beth Broussard** purchased Christmas gifts to fill two wish lists received from Faith House, which provides shelter and relocation services to families who are victims of domestic violence. All the staff members involved went above and beyond to fill the wish lists of these families, who are going through a difficult time. Great job!

### Celebrating the Christmas Spirit



Lafayette OJJ enjoyed some Christmas spirit as the region hosted its annual Christmas lunch. The region's resident chef, **PPS Joey Denais**, fried two turkeys, and other staff brought side dishes and desserts, and everyone ate their fill... some more than their fill. After lunch, the staff enjoyed a fun-filled round of Dirty Santa, and everyone who played walked away with a

nifty little gift. It was a wonderful way to share the holiday spirit with each other.

*Below, Lafayette OJJ staff gather for fellowship and a Christmas meal.*



\*\*\*\*\*



*Celebrating the season wherever you are: helicopters in Afghanistan. Photo by JCY Adm. Asst. Ramona Garror's brother Sgt. Major V.P. Singleton.*

## Lake Charles Regional Office

### Going the Extra Mile...Literally

In early December, **PPO Fred Fontenot** shared an idea and began requesting assistance to arrange transport for interested, local parents of youth at Swanson so they could attend the holiday parties at the facility. **Fred** arranged transportation for the Swanson Christmas program, a process that involved many families and transport officers, coordination of youth in multiple dorms and conversations and planning with Swanson **Director Vickie Shoecraft**. Thank you, Fred, for valuing our families.

**PPOs Fred Fontenot, Ronald Gilchrist and Jeff Haley** arranged and participated in a basketball game with the local detention youth. This was the first time they played in this setting with detention kids. They got a thorough work-out. **Fred, Jeff and Ronald** continue to play basketball at facilities whenever possible.

**PPO Rebecca Harmon** did well recently in Beauregard Parish court. The ADA was considering recommending placement for a former OJJ probationer when he reoffended. OJJ was scrambling to find a bed for a youth we were not expecting to receive into custody. After Rebecca spoke with the ADA, the District Attorney's Office and judge's office agreed to allow OJJ an opportunity to complete a PDI and return to court prepared with some alternatives to custody. The result: a child did not enter OJJ's custody unnecessarily on that date.

**PPS Melissa Cross, PPO Rebecca Harmon, and PPO Monet Newman** attended Beauregard Parish's December Planning Board meeting to collaborate with other professionals.

OJJ custody youth **Joseph V.**, who is placed at Jetson, made the honor roll and was selected as the Most Participating Student at Jetson's Scenic Alternative High School. His

probation officer, **PPO Monet Newman**, is very proud of him and wished to acknowledge his accomplishments!

### Lake Charles' White Christmas

On the night of December 20, just before Christmas, Lake Charles, Louisiana experienced really gusty weather and a great deal of debris resulted. The wind gusts left Lake Charles OJJ with a "white Christmas." Papers from a nearby business trailed the streets and gathered in front of our office!



*Lake Charles' White Christmas!*

Moral of the story: Always shred all case-specific, confidential information, per policy. **Do not** place confidential documents in the trash in whole, legible condition. Fortunately these were **not** OJJ documents, but what a mess we would have had if they had been. We're sure the former owner of these documents did not intend them for public viewing.

### OJJ Staff Will Enjoy Courthouse Re-Do

Congratulations to **District Attorney** (and Champion of Change recipient) **David Burton**, for his efforts resulting in funding for courthouse renovations. The Beauregard Parish Police Jury plans an expansion and renovation of the historic courthouse that will be similar to the renovations of the Morehouse Parish Courthouse in Bastrop, LA, which was built by same architect in the early 1900s.



*Beauregard Parish Courthouse*

The courthouse renovations will include handicapped accessibility, elevators, air conditioning, better public restrooms, and will address the limited parking area. So, if you are passing through DeRidder in Beauregard Parish, please be sure to spend a little \$, as part of the tax on your purchase will help this project - which directly impacts this OJJ office!



*Morehouse Parish Courthouse, above and below.*



### Christmas Celebrations

The office had tons of fun with Secret Santa. The participants were **RM Ann Vick**, **PPS Melissa Cross**, **PPOs Hollie Comeaux**, **Rebecca Harmon**, **Monet Newman** and **Angie Stevens**. The gifts were a big hit! People were much better at being sneaky this year! Everyone also brought food and goodies for our annual Christmas party.

## Monroe Regional Office

### Celebrating the Christmas Spirit

Monroe OJJ sponsored a child for the CASA Christmas program. Staff donated time and money in shopping for our teenage girl. It was a great cause and we had a good time. It helped put us all in the Christmas Spirit.

*PPO2s Jeremy Fox and Greg Colvin trim the Monroe OJJ Christmas tree.*



*Monroe OJJ RM Patty Newman (way in back!) and her staff gather for a holiday portrait.*

Monroe OJJ held its annual Christmas party, which included food and fun. As usual, Dirty Santa became loud and rowdy. It's amazing how upset someone can get when you take away their Deluxe Car Cleaning Kit.

Monroe OJJ would like to acknowledge the generosity of **One of Our Own**. **PPO3 Gary Hunter** prepared a turkey for two youth and their family, that he serves. Gary says he was preparing food for his own family when he thought of the youth and their mother. Gary stopped cooking and rushed to the grocery store to purchase what he needed. The expression of gratitude on the faces of the youth and family were priceless, more than worthwhile for Gary. God bless Gary for his act of compassion and his concern for others.



## Congratulations



Please join all of us at Monroe OJJ in congratulating **PPO3 Jennifer Bible** on her recent promotion to Probation and Parole Supervisor. *Congratulations, Jennifer!*

## Goodbye and Best Wishes

Monroe OJJ said goodbye to **PPO3 David McMillan**, right, who recently retired. David spent over 20 years working with OJJ youth and their families. He will be greatly missed by his clients and his friends at OJJ.



*PPS Karl Wallace and PPO3 Patrick Cooper enjoy David's cake.*



*Celebrating with David - Above, PPO3 Jackie Kindrix, PPO3 Steve Pelfrey and PPO2 Mark Miller. Below, PPS Jennifer Bible, PS Walteree Barnes and PPO2 Valerie Nordstrom.*



## Meetings and Trainings Attended

**RM Patty Newman** and **PPS Gail Wilson** attended the Training Advisory Council Annual Meeting in Baton Rouge.

Supervisors from Monroe OJJ joined supervisors from Tallulah OJJ, Shreveport OJJ, Natchitoches OJJ and Swanson Center for Youth for the Northern Region Supervisor Training at Delta Community College in Monroe. The topic was *Regionalization of OJJ Structure*. Presenters included Monroe **RM Patty Newman**, Shreveport **RM Kristi Martin** and Swanson **Director Vickie Shoecraft**.

**PPO2 Valerie Nordstrom** and **PPO2 Gregory Colvin** recently participated in a webinar training entitled "Family Integration Transition."

Monroe OJJ staff successfully completed all mandatory training for 2012. The Training Advisory Committee met to discuss training needs for 2013. Committee members include **RM Patty Newman**, **PPS Gail Wilson**, **PPS Karl Wallace**, **PPS Jennifer Bible**, **PPO2 Jeremy Fox**, **PPO3 Willie Hunter**, **PPO3 Erica Hollingsworth** and **AC3 Kashka Flintroy**.

## Snowflakes for Sandy Hook

Monroe OJJ recently participated in a national community service project called "Snowflakes for Sandy Hook." The goal of the project, initiated following the tragic school shooting in Newtown, Connecticut, was to create a "winter wonderland" of unique, handmade snowflakes for the students and teachers of Sandy Hook Elementary School as they returned to school in 2013. In addition to our PPOs, many of the youth in our region also contributed snowflakes to the project. We collected 113 snowflakes overall! We hope this small token of our support helps to ease the transition of the affected teachers and students back into the school environment.



*Left, PPO3 Jeremy Keyes with an outstanding snowflake he created. Right, the limited edition PPS Karl Wallace snowflake, which we decided to keep for ourselves and enjoy at the office.*



*Our finished project!*

## Update on the Snowflakes for Sandy Hook Project



*The program, organized by the Connecticut PTSA, was suspended in early January, overwhelmed by the outpouring of generosity from around the nation and some 50 countries. The Connecticut PTSA initially thought they'd get a few boxes of snowflakes, but it found itself buried in mail. The PTSA said on its website, "At this time, we have enough beautiful snowflakes to blanket the community of Newtown." –The Editor*

## Natchitoches Regional Office

### Employees of the Month



**November Employee of the Month  
PPO 2 Ieisha Beasley**



**December Employee of the Month  
Transport Officer  
Rachal Martin**



*Natchitoches OJJ recognized four of our staff who are veterans in a Veteran's Day celebration. They received gifts and certificates to honor their military service. Back row, PPO2 Ieisha Beasley, U.S. Army; PPS Simon Sarpy, U.S. Navy; front, PPO2 Brenda Sarpy, U.S. Army and PPO1 Christopher Johnson, U.S. Army Reserves.*





*The Natchitoches OJJ staff enjoyed lunch at Chili's restaurant for their thanksgiving celebration.*

### Community involvement



*PPOs Heather Christophe, Brenda Sarpy, Ashley Meacham, Christopher Johnson, and five boys from Ware Group Home visited Greenmeadow Nursing Home in Red River Parish. They spent time with the patients, played bingo, made cards and had coffee with them.*

### Social Services Quarterly Meeting Hosted

Our Social Services quarterly meeting was hosted by **SW5 Nelda Graham** at the Natchitoches OJJ office. Central office **Program Manager Angela Bridgewater** chaired the meeting and central office **Program Manager Arlona Morgan** gave a presentation on the LAMOD Quality Assurance Checklist.

Following the meeting, a celebration of the holiday season was held, with a gift exchange and refreshments. We would like to thank all the social services staff who participated from

the following regions: Thibodaux, Lafayette/Opelousas, Hammond, Baton Rouge and New Orleans. Also, thanks to **Nancy Gautreau**, our most recent retired **Social Worker**, who attended the meeting.

Our social services staff would like to welcome our newest addition, **Wanda Veutress**.



*Above, participants at the social services meeting. Below, retiree Nancy Gautreau joined us.*



*Wanda Veutress*



*Plenty of goodies and gifts.*





## New Orleans-Metro Office

### Employee of the Month

**PPO Shawn Herbert** was chosen December Employee of the Month. Aside from covering all of her regular duties as a PPO, Shawn gave a training presentation on Motivational Interviewing, and she was instrumental in obtaining court approval for a Christmas furlough for one of her clients just before the court adjourned for the holidays. Shawn has also consistently volunteered to assist her co-workers with assignments and is always willing to give a helping hand around the office.

### Door Decorating Contest Winners

Congratulations to the staff of **PPS Justine Aguiar** for winning the Door Decorating contest. Great job by her entire staff! The pictures show the process!



## Christmas Celebration in the Community



OJJ staff joined the staff and students at a New Orleans school for a heart-filled Christmas Play in the Community. The celebration was enjoyed by all.

## The Dream Trip of a Lifetime

**AC2 Karen Ragan** has finally lived out her lifelong dream of meeting singer-songwriter **Barry Manilow**. In December that dream became a reality.



*AC2 Karen Ragan, right, with, well, you know!*

Karen came back to work eager to talk about her trip to San Jose, California, to meet Barry. She told us that when she walked into the room, Barry welcomed her with open arms. "Barry is a real down-to-earth person," she said. "While I was talking to Barry I felt at ease and very comfortable." She related that Barry called her the night before their meeting so they could color coordinate their attire!



Karen made a donation to Barry's charity that puts music back into our schools. "Big or small, our kids need music," she said. Barry Manilow formed The Manilow Music Project, as part of his nonprofit Manilow Health and Hope Fund. The Project highlights the importance of music programs in schools and donates instruments and materials to school music programs.

## Shreveport Regional Office

### Employee of the Month

**PPO2 Cornealious McSwain**



### Congratulations

**PPO2 Cornealious McSwain** graduated from the Caddo Sheriff's Regional Training Academy's 32nd basic training class. At the graduation, graduates took the oath of office, received their badges, and participated in a special ceremony where family and friends pinned on their badges for the first time.



*Shreveport OJJ stand in support of the new graduate: PPS Terri Harber, PPO3 Lanita Lars, PPO2 Cornealious McSwain, Program Specialist Jan Crain, PPO1 Jason Brown, PPO1 Latoya Sherman, PPO1 Jacqueline Dixon, PPS Rick Ladner, PPO3 Todd Carlisle, PPO3 Alan Glover and PPO3 Charles Herrmann.*

## Christmas Celebrated with Awards, Luncheon

Shreveport OJJ celebrated the season with a Christmas lunch and presentation of awards. Plaques were presented to **PPO3 Jessica Flores**, Most Improved Employee of the Year; **PPO3 Todd Carlisle**, Senior Employee of the Year; **PPS Rick Ladner**, Supervisor of the Year; **PPO2 Holly Black**, Expert Shooter and Rookie of the Year; **PPO3 Lanita Lars**, Positive Attitude Award and **Transport Officer Calvin Jackson**, Positive Attitude Award.



*PPO3 Jessica Flores, PPO3 Todd Carlisle, PPS Rick Ladner and PPO2 Holly Black with their awards.*



Proud parents **PPO2 Holly Black** and husband **Quinton** welcomed Baby Madison, born December 21, weighing 6 lbs., 8 oz. and 9 inches long. Mother and baby are doing great!

### Happy Birthday

**PPO3 Charles Herrmann**  
**Transport Officer Amanda Lummus**



## Swanson Center for Youth

### Celebration of Change

Swanson had another successful Celebration of Change program with this year's theme being "Falling for Change." The decorations were spectacular, and many area dignitaries joined as our guests.



The Swanson Color Guard started the program and did an outstanding job of posting the flags. USMC Drill Sergeant and Training Specialist James Woods worked tirelessly with the youth and it definitely showed.

Under the direction of Program Manager Jan James and JJS4 Charles Donaldson, a panel of youth played a fun Swanson history feud game. State Representative Marcus L. Hunter attended and presented Swanson with a resolution for all our efforts put forth toward juvenile justice. Judge Terry Doughty also attended to show support.

Keynote speaker was Rev. Fred Dean, a member of the Pro Football Hall of Fame. Rev. Dean lives in his hometown of Arcadia, LA, where he is also a pastor. He was a standout at LA Tech, and his professional career started with the San Diego Chargers and ended with the San Francisco 49ers.



*Asst.  
Secretary  
Sean  
Hamilton,  
Rev. Fred  
Dean and Dr.  
Mary Livers.*



*From left, West Monroe Police Chief Christopher Elg, Representative Marcus L. Hunter and Rev. Fred Dean at the Celebration of Change.*



*Judge Terry Doughty and Regional Director Carolyn Lewis joined in the celebration.*

### Second Chance Kennels

Construction is complete on the new dog kennel for the Second Chance Kennels program. Instructor Bobby Moffett and his carpentry class worked on the building project for several months and did an excellent job.

Swanson is partnering with the Humane Society Adoption Center of Monroe (HSAC) to implement the Second Chance Kennels program, to provide an opportunity that will allow our youth to provide a community service by training and caring for unwanted dogs, to make them more adoptable into permanent homes. While socializing and training the dogs, the youth will learn therapeutic strategies that will help them to succeed when they transition back into their communities. Youth who are involved in programs with pets develop leadership skills, empathy for others and respect for all living creatures.



HSAC houses dogs and puppies that have been surrendered at its no-kill shelter. As a dog completes the program at Swanson, it will be returned to the center more adoptable and more likely to find permanent homes in the community. Our youth will have the opportunity to train and care for the dogs, and will benefit by developing good work habits and valuable vocational skills. The kids will gain self-confidence, the ability to work as a team, and will learn positive reinforcement skills and patience.

*The photos below show the progress on the construction project for Second Chance Kennels.*



*Director of Education Kim Mims shared this photo of the feed shed for Second Chance Kennels, built by the carpentry students. "It looks like a kid's playhouse!" she said. "Nice work by Mr. Moffett and these students."*



### OJJ Son Earns Honorable Mention

Director Vickie Shoecraft's son, **Adrian Shoecraft**, was named honorable mention All-Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association. Adrian is a junior at the University of Central Oklahoma, where he plays linebacker. He was UCO's second-leading tackle, despite missing the final two games due to an injury, finishing with 54 tackles.

### Tallulah Regional Office

Tallulah OJJ completed several training requirements and reviewed policies.

**RM Ruth Stephens, PPS Johnnie Bowman, PPS Margo Corulla and AC4 Patricia Dense** attended Supervisor's Training held in Monroe at Delta Community College.

Tallulah OJJ staff members helped plan and arrange a gun raffle for the local American Cancer Society's Relay for Life drawing in December. Thanks to all for their hard work in helping to make the fundraiser a success.

At the December staff meeting, everyone celebrated the Christmas season with a steak dinner. Our own master chef, **PPO Dramian Crockett**, marinated and grilled the steaks. Also served were baked potatoes, green salad, French bread, and various desserts.

## Thibodaux Regional Office

### Employee of the Month

Congratulations to **PPO3 Herman Matherne**, November Employee of the Month.

Congratulations to **Administrative Coordinator Doddie Picou**, Employee of the Month for December.

They are both valuable assets to our team here in Thibodaux.

### Farewell

**Thibodaux OJJ** wished a warm farewell to **PPS Vicky Marcel**, who retired with 39 years of service to OJJ and the State of Louisiana. Have a wonderful retirement, Ms. Vicky! We will miss you.

### Continuing to live out the OJJ Mission and Vision.....

**PPO3 Rachel Loupe** reports that **Youth James L.** earned an early release from probation, and **Judge Lemmon** personally wrote him a letter of praise and encouragement upon his release. In addition, Rachel mentioned that she recently saw **James L.'s** name in the newspaper, as he was chosen Student of the Month.

**PPO3 Keith Kotoski** reports that **Youth Anthony G.** earned his GED and the TOPS scholarship, and he will enroll at Northwestern State University.

**Social Service Counselor Reshonn Saul** participated in the toy drive in LaPlace held by the members of the St. John the Baptist Parish Youth Planning Board Prevention Committee. Through donations, they were able to provide toys for over 100 children in need, including three Thibodaux OJJ families in LaPlace. What was really exciting for



**Reshonn** was the outcome of the Thibodaux OJJ toy drive.

**PPO3 Jeff Barrilleaux** made a request for a special toy for one of the kids on his caseload. After making a few phone calls, **Reshonn** found

someone willing to donate the item. She then went to tell Jeff the exciting news. She said, "It was very refreshing to hear the excitement in Jeff's voice, and see the smile on his face, when I told him that someone was donating that special request for that young man on his case load. The look on **PPO3 Sandra Rodrigue's** face when I returned with toys for the large family of nine on her caseload, and the smile from **PPO3 Tressa Gros**, as she and **PPO3 Summer Ferriera** wrapped the gifts as I brought them in, was wonderful! Christmas is about giving!"

### Just for laughs.....

**PPO3 Summer Ferriera** reported that **Youth Alyssa S.** earned 1<sup>st</sup> place at School on her essay, "Chores A.K.A. The Dishes."

### Chores AKA The Dishes

I hate doing the dishes! They make me sick! Just the sound of them being put in the sink makes my adrenaline burst through the clouds. When I'm washing them, I can't stand the sound of the cups and plates rubbing together. Squeak, squeak, it makes my eardrums feel as if thousands of little needles are getting stuck in my ears. But there's nothing far worse than the words "Alyssa come do the dishes."

Sometimes I just want to sew my mom's mouth shut, so I don't have to hear those blood pumping words. You might think it's "easy," but no. You have to scrub and scrub

to get all the nasty dried up food off. And the worst part is, when I'm washing them my legs and feet start to itch. It's like I need some special cream or something.

Oh, yeah, and every time... I mean every time, there's no stopping it; the forks and knives always stab me.

I hate... I mean hate with all capital letters HATE doing the dishes.

### Winter Allergies Can Be Mistaken for Colds

Tis the season for stuffy noses. But what feels like a cold could actually be allergies, triggered by dust, smelly home items and a host of irritants — in-laws excluded.

Although allergies can share some symptoms with the common cold, there are clues that can help you find the source of your misery and choose the right remedy.

"A cold can be accompanied by low-grade fever, sore throat and a cough, whereas allergies usually don't have those things," said Dr. William Schaffner, chair of preventive medicine at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, Tenn.

"You might have a little bit of sore throat with allergies, but it's mostly runny nose and red, itchy eyes," he said.

The viruses that cause colds can also cause body aches and fatigue — symptoms you will not have from allergic reactions.

The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases gives this table as guidance:

Symptom	Cold	Allergy
Cough	Usually	Sometimes
General aches and pains	Sometimes	Never
Fatigue	Sometimes	Sometimes
Itchy eyes	Rarely	Usually
Sneezing	Usually	Usually
Sore throat	Usually	Sometimes
Runny nose	Usually	Usually
Stuffy nose	Usually	Usually
Fever	Rarely	Never

If you have a cold, you might find relief in over-the-counter decongestants and pain relievers, Schaffner said. And don't forget to drink plenty of fluids, rest and take it easy, too.

\*\*\*\*\*

From our friends and relatives in Colorado...Denver's major TV news station posted the weather forecast below for the week of December 21, when the Mayan calendar predicted the end of the world, which Denver residents celebrated with lots of EOW parties...before waking up the next morning to the Saturday forecast:







## BCCY Culinary Arts & Occupations



**Chef Ronald J. Sonnier, CEC**

### Recipe of the Month

Can't believe it's 2013. This is going to be a great year full of exciting things and lots of great eating. This month's recipes will be great for those times when everyone gets together for a little fun and relaxation.

In December I was able to test 15 students for their ServSafe Certification and seven of the students were certified. The test wasn't as easy as the others thought, but they will get another chance to take the test in February. December was also a month for celebrating the Christmas holidays and trying to make our students feel the warmth of the season and keep their spirits up. Sometimes it's a hard task for some of them, but for the most part we were able to accomplish the task.

In January we were honored with a visit from several judges and court representatives, and the students prepared goodie gift boxes for all the guests. They were really a big hit. All the visitors were impressed with the facility and talked about how proud they were of the work we are doing here at Bridge City. Go, Team!

I have a great class of students in Culinary Arts at this time, and when we send them back into the community with a skill that they can use to go out and perform for a chance to better themselves, it is the most rewarding feeling that life can offer. So many of the students that have left call back and thank me for giving them something that can help them get a start in life.

God bless you all for all you do!

Have a great month and remember if you have any requests for recipes or food questions, please let me know at [ronald.sonnier@la.gov](mailto:ronald.sonnier@la.gov) . *C'EST SI BON!*



*Dessert Bowls prepared for everyone at the Christmas luncheon served by the Culinary Arts students.*



*A last minute check from Chef Sonnier before serving a big luncheon, to make sure everyone is looking good. Culinarian Jesse P. (center) is ready for action.*

### Newly ServSafe-Certified Culinaricians



*Jesse P.*



*Joshua T.*



*Shawn B.*



*Steven J.*



*Joshua D.*



*Cookbooks and goodie boxes for the judges and guests.*



*Ready for Mardi Gras in Culinary Arts.*

**Recipes: something for the sweet tooth and a great dip!****Pecan Tarts**

6 ounces softened cream cheese  
 $\frac{2}{3}$  cup softened butter  
 2 cups all purpose flour  
 pinch of salt  
 1 cup chopped pecans  
 3 whole eggs

1 cup firmly packed dark brown sugar  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  cup light corn syrup  
 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  tbsp. melted butter  
 1 tsp. vanilla extract  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. salt

Beat cream cheese and butter at medium speed with an electric mixer until blended. Add flour and salt; beat until combined. Divide dough in half, flatten each half into a round disk about 1 inch thick. Wrap in heavy duty plastic and chill for 1 hour.

Shape dough into 2 inch balls. Flatten balls and place in 3 inch muffin cups, forming each into a shell. Dough should form a lip above muffin cups. Sprinkle pecans evenly in pastry cups.

Whisk together eggs and next 5 ingredients until blended. Carefully pour egg mixture evenly over pecans. Pastries will be full. Bake at 350° for 30 to 35 minutes or until set.

**Sonnier's Baked Artichoke and Corn Dip**

Serves 12.

1 14-oz. can artichoke hearts, drained and chopped  
 1 16-oz. can corn kernels, drained  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chopped green onions  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 4-oz. can chopped jalapeño chilies, drained

1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese  
 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup mayonnaise  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. garlic salt  
 Corn chips (Frito Scoops work well)

Combine the artichoke hearts, corn, green onions, jalapeño chilies, Cheddar cheese and Parmesan cheese in a bowl. Add the mayonnaise and garlic salt and mix well.

Spoon into a lightly greased baking dish. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes.

Serve with corn chips. You can substitute fresh garlic for the garlic salt and fresh jalapeño chilies for the canned chilies if preferred.



# The Inside Scoop...of OJJ

*The Inside Scoop...of OJJ* is published monthly to communicate with and about OJJ staff in offices and facilities throughout the state, about agency activities, happenings and items of interest.

*The Inside Scoop...of OJJ* is produced by the Central Office with input from staff statewide.

...until next month

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